

## CHAPTER 20

### Tâ Hâ

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *sections*; 135 *verses*)

The initial letters of this chapter, for which see 1*a*, serve as its title. The greater part of it is devoted to the story of Mûsâ, showing how Mûsâ was successful after passing through various trials. The subject-matter of the chapter is given in the very first statement made in verse 2, that the Qur'ân was revealed to be triumphant in the world.

The last chapter deals at length with the story of 'Îsâ, and is followed by one dealing in detail with the story of Mûsâ. It opens with a comforting message to the Holy Prophet, to the effect that he should not be disheartened by the bitter opposition to his preaching, because his mission would assuredly be crowned with success. The first five sections (out of a total of eight) are taken up with the story of Mûsâ, the Prophet's mission being introduced towards the close of the fifth section. The remaining three sections are taken up with the description of the opposition to the Prophet and the consequences of that opposition.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to the same period as that of the last chapter. Both Ibn Hishâm and Ibn Sa'd connect this chapter with the story of 'Umar's conversion to Islâm, which took place in the fifth year of the Prophet's Call. It was the recital of this chapter by his sister that changed 'Umar's murderous intention against the Prophet into a feeling of deep love and reverence for him.

### SECTION 1: Mûsâ is Called

In the name of Allâh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

#### 1 Tâ Hâ

2 We have not revealed the Qur'ân to you that you may be unsuccessful;<sup>a</sup>

3 But it is a reminder to him who fears:

4 A revelation from Him Who created the earth and the high *samâwât*.<sup>a</sup>

5 The Beneficent is established on the Throne of Power.

**6** To Him belongs whatever is in the *samâwât* and whatever is in the earth and whatever is between them and whatever is beneath the soil.

**7** And if you utter the saying aloud, surely He knows the secret, and what is yet more hidden.<sup>a</sup>

**8** Allâh — there is no Deity but He. His are the most beautiful names.

**2a.** That is, it could not be that the Prophet, to whom the Qur'ân was revealed, should remain unsuccessful in bringing about the transformation for which it was revealed. It is a consolation, and at the same time a clear prophecy, that a mighty transformation will be brought about, not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for that was the object which the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân had set out to accomplish from the first.

**4a.** The Qur'ân cannot be a failure, because it is a manifestation of the will of Him Who holds sway over all.

**7a.** The *secret* is that which a man hides in his heart, and *what is yet more hidden* is that which is in the subconscious mind. The conscious and the subconscious are all alike known to Allâh.

**9** And has the story of Mûsâ come to you?

**10** When he saw a fire, he said to his people: Stay, I see a fire; haply I may bring to you there from a live coal or find guidance at the fire.<sup>a</sup>

**11** So when he came to it, a voice came: O Mûsâ,

**12** Surely I am your *Rabb*, so take off your shoes; surely you are in the sacred valley Tuwâ.<sup>a</sup>

**13** And I have chosen thee so listen to what is revealed:

**14** Surely I am Allâh, there is no Deity but I, so serve Me, and keep up prayer for My remembrance,

**15** Surely the Hour is coming — I am about to make it manifest<sup>a</sup> — so that every *nafs* may be rewarded as it strives.

**10a.** As the verses that follow show, Mûsâ received a Divine revelation on this occasion, and his seeing the fire was also a part of the revelation; it was with the devotional eye that he saw it. The Arabic Glorious Qur'ân has stated elsewhere that revelation is received only in three ways (42:51), and in each of these the recipient is really given particular senses with which to feel and see things; see 42:51a.

**12a.** The command to take off the shoes is a metaphorical expression for *making the heart vacant from care for family and property* (*Anwâr al-Tanzîl wa Asrâr al-Ta'wîl* (Commentary), by Qâzî Abû Sa'îd 'Abd Allâh ibn 'Umar al-Baidâwî). According to others: "It is a command to stay; like as you say to him whom you desire to stay, Take off thy garment and thy boots and the like" (*Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muhibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faïd Murtadâ* and the *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane).

Some think that *Tuwâ* is the name of the valley; others interpret it as meaning *twice (blessed)*. *Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by *Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî* gives a third explanation, saying that the word *tuwâ* (lit., *rolled up*) is spoken in reference to the election of Moses, so that he had not to exert himself to attain that great goal.

**15a.** *Ikhfâ'* is one of the words which convey contrary significances, *concealing* or *removing that which conceals* a thing (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). But that here it does not mean *concealing* is made clear by the context. It is the coming of the Hour and the meting out of rewards and punishments that the verse deals with, which is clearly *removing the veil* or *making the hour manifest*. It should be noted that the Hour does not necessarily signify the Resurrection; on the other hand, it very often indicates the *doom* of a people, *the hour of the departure of their glory and power*.

**16** So let not him, who believes not in it and follows his low desire, turn you away from it, lest you perish.

**17** And what is this in your right hand, O Mûsâ?

**18** He said: This is my staff — I lean on it, and I beat the leaves with it for my sheep, and I have other uses for it.

**19** He said: Cast it down, O Mûsâ.

**20** So he cast it down, and lo! It was a serpent, gliding.<sup>a</sup>

**21** He said: Seize it and fear not. We shall return it to its former state.

**22** And press your hand to your side, it will come out white without evil — another sign:<sup>a</sup>

**23** That We may show you of Our greater signs.

**24** Go to Pharaoh, surely he has exceeded the limits.

## SECTION 2: Mûsâ and Hârûn go to Pharaoh

**25** He said: My *Rabb*, expand my breast for me:

**26** And ease my affair for me:

**20a.** All this was experienced by Mûsâ in that particular state in which the recipient of a revelation finds himself at the time of the revelation; see 7:108a. What was shown to Mûsâ on this occasion had a deeper significance beneath it; see verse 23, where the object of showing these signs is stated to be that *We may show thee of Our greater signs*. Thus the two signs mentioned here were really indications of something greater. The word ‘*asâ*’ stands metaphorically for a community; see 2:60a. Hence the sight of his staff becoming a gliding serpent was shown to him as an indication that his community, i.e., the Isrâ’îlite people, who had been reduced to a state of slavery under Pharaoh, would soon become a living nation.

**22a.** Bearing in mind what has been said above, the *yad baidâ*’ has also a deeper meaning. Literally *a white hand*, it signifies *an argument made very clear* (*Tâj al-‘Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muhibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faid Murtadâ*); and a *demonstrating* or *demonstrated argument* or *allegation* or *evidence* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). The deeper significance in this case was that his arguments would prevail.

**27** And loose the knot from my tongue,<sup>a</sup>

**28** (That) they may understand my word.

**29** And give to me an aider from my family:<sup>a</sup>

**30** Hârûn, my brother;

**31** Add to my strength by him,

**32** And make him share my task —

**33** So that we may glorify You much,

**34** And much remember You.

**35** Surely, You are ever Seeing us.

**36** He said: You are indeed granted your petition, O Mûsâ.

**37** And indeed We bestowed on you a favour at another time,

**38** When We revealed to your mother that which was revealed:

**39** Put him into a chest, then cast it into the river, the river will cast it upon the shore — there an enemy to Me and an enemy to him shall take him up. And I shed on you love from Me; and that you may be brought up before My eyes.<sup>a</sup>

**27a.** It is to put an unnatural interpretation on the words to search for the knot or impediment of the tongue in the burning of it. The *'uqdah of the tongue* is the coarseness or roughness of it (*Lisân al-'Arab* (Dictionary), by 'Allâmah Abu-l-Fadl Jamâl al-Dîn Muḥammad ibn Mukarram). And the man who has *'uqdah* (i.e., knot) in his tongue is called *'aqid*, explained as meaning *a man having an impediment in his tongue, unable to speak freely* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane).

**29a.** *Wazîr* (from *wizr*, meaning *burden*) is literally *one who bears a burden*, and hence *an aider* or *helper*, because he bears the burden of another. It may also be rendered as *minister*, as the word is extensively used as signifying *a minister of a king*.

**39a.** This is in accordance with the Bible narrative. Moses was born at a time when Pharaoh had commanded all male children born to the Isrâ'îlites to be thrown into the Nile. Moses' mother kept him concealed for three months, and at last, unable to hide him any longer, cast him upon the river in an ark of bulrushes, whence he was picked up by Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 2:1–10).

**40** When thy sister went and said: Shall I direct you to one who will take charge of him? So We brought you back to your mother that her eye might be cooled and she should not grieve.<sup>a</sup> And you did kill a man, then We delivered thee from grief, and tried you with (many) trials. Then you did stay for years among the people of Midian. Then you came hither as ordained, O Mûsâ.<sup>b</sup>

**41** And I have chosen you for Myself.

**42** Go you and your brother with My messages and be not remiss in remembering Me.

**43** Go both of you to Pharaoh, surely he is inordinate;

**44** Then speak to him a gentle word, haply he may mind or fear.

**45** They said: Our *Rabb*, we fear lest he hasten to do evil to us or be inordinate.

**46** He said: Fear not, surely I am with you — I do hear and see.

**47** So go you to him and say: Surely we are two messengers of your *Rabb*; so send forth the Children of Isrâ'îl with us; and torment them not. Indeed we have brought to you a message from your *Rabb*, and peace to him who follows the guidance.

**48** It has indeed been revealed to us that punishment will overtake him who rejects and turns away.<sup>a</sup>

**40a.** See Exodus 2:7–9.

**40b.** See Exodus 2:11–15.

**48a.** This contains a clear warning to Pharaoh of his end in case of rejection. Mûsâ and Hârûn were directed to convey this message. The whole account of their actual going to Pharaoh and the delivery of this message is omitted here, and the next verse gives us Pharaoh's reply to their demand.

**49** (Pharaoh) said: Who is your *Rabb*, O Mûsâ?

**50** He said: Our *Rabb* is He Who gives to everything its creation, then guides (it).<sup>a</sup>

**51** He said: What then is the state of the former generations?

**52** He said: The knowledge thereof is with my *Rabb* in a book; my *Rabb* neither errs nor forgets —

**53** Who made the earth for you an expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the clouds. Then thereby We bring forth pairs of various herbs.

**54** Eat and pasture your cattle. Surely there are signs in this for men of understanding.

### SECTION 3: Mûsâ and the Enchanters

**55** From it We created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it raise you a second time.

**56** And truly We showed him all Our signs but he rejected and refused.

**57** Said he: Have you come to us to turn us out of our land by your enchantment, O Mûsâ?

**58** We too can bring to you enchantment like it, so make an appointment between us and thee, which we break not, (neither) we nor you, (in) a central place.

**50a.** This verse contains an argument for the necessity of Divine revelation. It says that, as Allâh has created everything, and then given it the qualities and means by which it can attain to perfection — for this is the true significance of *hadâ*, i.e., *guides it (to its goal)* — so man also stands in need of spiritual and moral directions for his attainment to perfection.

**59** (Mûsâ) said: Your appointment is the day of the Festival, and let the people be gathered in the early forenoon.

**60** So Pharaoh went back and settled his plan, then came.

**61** Mûsâ said to them: Woe to you! Forge not a lie against Allâh, lest He destroy you by punishment, and he fails indeed who forges (a lie).

**62** So they disputed one with another about their affair and kept the discourse secret.

**63** They said: These are surely two enchanters who would drive you out from your land by their enchantment, and destroy your excellent institutions.

**64** So settle your plan, then come in ranks, and he will succeed indeed this day who is uppermost.

**65** They said: O Mûsâ, will you cast, or shall we be the first to cast down?

**66** He said: Nay! Cast you down. Then lo! Their cords and their rods — it appeared to him by their enchantment as if they ran.<sup>a</sup>

**67** So Mûsâ conceived fear in his mind.<sup>a</sup>

**66a.** The forces of untruth appear to carry the day for a while, but are soon vanquished; see verse 69. Also compare 7:117, where these *cords and rods* are described as *their lies*.

**67a.** Moses feared that people might be misled.

**68** We said: Fear not, surely you are the uppermost.

**69** And cast down what is in your right hand — it will eat up what they have wrought. What they have wrought is only the trick of an enchanter, and the enchanter succeeds not where so ever he comes from.

**70** So the enchanters fell down prostrate, saying: We believe in the *Rabb* of Hârûn and Mûsâ.

**71** (Pharaoh) said: You believe in him before I give you leave! Surely he is your chief who taught you enchantment. So I shall cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides and I shall crucify you on the trunks of palm-trees, and you shall certainly know which of us can give the severer and the more abiding chastisement.

**72** They said: We cannot prefer you to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him Who made us, so decide as you will decide. You can only decide about this world's life.

**73** Surely we believe in our *Rabb* that He may forgive us our faults and the magic to which you did compel us. And Allâh is Best and ever Abiding.

**74** Whoso comes guilty to his *Rabb*, for him is surely hell. He will neither die therein, nor live.<sup>a</sup>

**75** And whoso comes to Him a believer, having done good deeds, for them are high ranks —

**74a.** Those in hell are not alive, because spiritually they are dead, and they are not dead because death would mean the cessation of their torments.

**76** Gardens of perpetuity, wherein flow rivers, to abide therein. And such is the reward of him who purifies himself.

#### **SECTION 4: The Isrâ'îlites worship the Calf**

**77** And certainly We revealed to Mûsâ: Travel by night with My servants, then strike for them a dry path in the sea, not fearing to be overtaken, nor being afraid.<sup>a</sup>

**78** So Pharaoh followed them with his armies, then there covered them of the sea that which covered them.

**79** And Pharaoh led his people astray and he guided not aright.

**80** O Children of Isrâ'îl, We truly delivered you from your enemy, and made a covenant with you on the blessed side of the mountain, and sent to you the manna and the quails.

**81** Eat of the good things We have provided for you, and be not inordinate in respect thereof, lest My wrath come upon you; and he on whom My wrath comes, he perishes indeed.

**82** And surely I am Forgiving toward him who repents and believes and does good, then walks aright.

**83** And what made you hasten from your people, O Mûsâ?

**84** He said: They are here on my track, and I hastened on to You, my *Rabb*, that You might be pleased.

**77a.** This shows that there was at that time a dry path in the sea; see 2:50a.



**85** He said: Surely We have tried your people in your absence, and the Sâmirî has led them astray.<sup>a</sup>

**86** So Mûsâ returned to his people angry, sorrowing. He said: O my people, did not your *Rabb* promise you a goodly promise? Did the promised time, then, seem long to you, or did you wish that displeasure from your Lord should come upon you, so that you broke (your) promise to me?

**87** They said: We broke not the promise to thee of our own accord, but we were made to bear the burdens of the ornaments of the people, then we cast them away, and thus did the Sâmirî suggest.<sup>a</sup>

**88** Then he brought forth for them a calf, a body, which had a hollow sound, so they said: This is your god and the god of Moses; but he forgot.<sup>a</sup>

**89** Could they not see that it returned no reply to them, nor controlled any harm or benefit for them?<sup>a</sup>

**85a.** The verse shows that some person other than Aaron was responsible for making the calf. From Rabbinical literature (see Jewish *Encyclopaedia*, Art. “Calf”) it appears that the Egyptians who had come with the Isrâ’îlites were foremost in demanding the making of the calf. And ‘Aṭâ’ held on the authority of ‘*Abd Allâh ibn ‘Abbâs*’ that he was an Egyptian who believed in Mûsâ and came along with the Isrâ’îlites. The opinion that he was of a people who worshipped the cow is also traceable to ‘*Abd Allâh ibn ‘Abbâs*’ (*Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî).

**87a.** The Isrâ’îlites may have borrowed ornaments from the Egyptians as stated in the Holy Fabricated Reconstructed Man-made Bible in the book of Exodus 12:35, and the reference may here be to those ornaments, or the significance may simply be that the nomadic tribes of Isrâ’îl, who were unaccustomed to these things, had imbibed these habits from the Egyptians, and now gave up those ornaments at the suggestion of the Sâmirî. The reply of the people states clearly they had not done the thing of *their own accord*, and hence the reference in the concluding words is to the suggestions cast into the minds of the people by the Sâmirî. And you say, *alqâ-hu ‘alai-hi*, meaning *he put it into his mind*, or *he suggested it* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane).

**88a.** According to ‘*Abd Allâh ibn ‘Abbâs*’, it had neither a voice nor a *nafs*, but it was only a sound produced by the air passing through the hollow metal of which it was made (*Jâmi‘ al-Bayân fî Tafsîr al-Qur’ân* (Commentary), by Al-Shaikh Mu‘în al-Dîn ibn Ṣafî al-Dîn).

**89a.** The argument made use of in this verse shows that Allâh not only listens to prayers but also gives a reply to His true worshippers when they pray to Him.

## SECTION 5: The End of Calf-worship

**90** And *Hârûn* indeed had said to them before: O my people, you are only tried by it, and surely your *Rabb* is the Beneficent Allâh, so follow me and obey my order.<sup>a</sup>

**91** They said: We shall not cease to keep to its worship until Mûsâ returns to us.

**92** (Mûsâ) said: O *Hârûn*, what prevented you, when you saw them going astray,

**93** That you did not follow me? Have you, then, disobeyed my order?

**94** He said: O son of my mother, seize me not by my beard, nor by my head. Surely I was afraid lest you should say: You have caused division among the Children of Isrâ'îl and not waited for my word.

**95** (Mûsâ) said: What was your object, O Sâmirî?

**96** He said: I perceived what they perceived not, so I took a handful from the footprints of the messenger then I cast it away. Thus did my *nafs* embellish (it) to me.<sup>a</sup>

**90a.** From this it is clear that not only had *Hârûn* no part in making the calf, but he even enjoined his people to give up its worship. The Qur'ân here contradicts the Bible.

**96a.** The stories which many commentators have related under this verse are all baseless and even Râzî has discredited them. The *rasûl*, or messenger, is evidently Mûsâ himself; his *athar* ("footprints") signifies his *Sunnah*, i.e., his *practices and sayings*, a significance to which all authorities agree (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane), the word being well-known in Muslim religious literature, and the *qabdat* is *taking* or *following those practices in part*, because *qabdat* denotes *a single act of taking*, or *only a handful*, i.e., *a small part of it*. The man who made the calf thus asserts that he had a clearer perception of things than the Isrâ'îlites, that he accepted the teachings of Mûsâ only partially, and confesses that he now threw off even that part and made a calf for worship.

**97** He said: Be gone then! It is for you in this life to say, Touch (me) not. And for you is a promise which shall not fail. And look at your deity to whose worship you have kept. We will certainly burn it, then we will scatter it in the sea.<sup>a</sup>

**98** Your Deity is only Allâh; there is no Deity but He. He comprehends all things in (His) knowledge.

**99** Thus relate We to you of the news of what has gone before. And indeed We have given you a Reminder from Ourselves.

**100** Whoever turns away from it, he will surely bear a burden on the day of Resurrection,

**101** Abiding therein. And evil will be their burden on the day of Resurrection —

**102** The day when the trumpet is blown; and We shall gather the guilty, blue-eyed, on that day,<sup>a</sup>

**103** Consulting together secretly: You tarried but ten (days).<sup>a</sup>

**97a.** This shows that the ashes of the calf were thrown into the sea, and the story of the Isrâ'îlites being made to drink of water mixed with the ashes of the calf is not, therefore, credited by the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân; see 2:93c. The Holy Fabricated Reconstructed Man-made Bible is again contradicted here; see the books of Exodus 32:20 and Deuteronomy 9:21. The punishment given to the Sâmirî is that of an outcast in society, who is prohibited from having any intercourse or relations with the Isrâ'îlite people.

**102a.** The word *zurq* means *blue-eyed*. According to *Anwâr al-Tanzîl wa Asrâr al-Ta'wîl* (Commentary), by Qâzî Abû Sa'îd 'Abd Allâh ibn 'Umar al-Baidâwî, blue being the colour of the eyes of the *Rûm* (i.e., the Greeks or the Romans), who were most hated by the Arabs, that colour was regarded by the Arabs as the worst colour for the eye. The word may also signify *blind*, in reference to the guilty being raised up blind in the Resurrection, for which see verse 124.

**103a.** The object of '*ashr*', ten, is omitted; but, as elsewhere the lovers of the world are described as loving to be *granted a life of a thousand years* (2:96), what is apparently indicated here is that they will have enjoyed ten centuries of great prosperity. Or, if the word *days* are understood, the ten days of the life of a nation would also mean ten centuries.

**104** We know best what they say when the fairest of them in course would say: You tarried but a day.<sup>a</sup>

## SECTION 6: The Prophet's Opponents

**105** And they ask you about the mountains.<sup>a</sup> Say: My *Rabb* will scatter them, as scattered dust,

**106** Then leave it a plain, smooth, level,

**107** Wherein you see no crookedness nor unevenness.

**108** On that day they will follow the Inviter, in whom is no crookedness; and the voices are low before the Beneficent Allâh, so that you hear naught but a soft sound.<sup>a</sup>

**109** On that day no intercession avails except of him whom the Beneficent allows, and whose word He is pleased with.

**110** He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they cannot comprehend it in knowledge.

**111** And faces shall be humbled before the Living, the Self-subsistent. And he who bears iniquity is indeed undone.

**104a.** Because a day is equal to a thousand years: “And they ask you to hasten on the chastisement, and Allâh by no means fails in His promise. And surely a day with your *Rabb* is as a thousand years of what you reckon” (22:47). It is the man who reminds them of this Divine promise that is called *the fairest of them in course*.

**105a.** The word *jabal* means a *mountain*, as well as the *lord* or *chief of a people* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). That the latter significance is intended here is shown by the context; see in particular verse 108: “On that day they will follow the Inviter”. In the same sense are to be taken the two verses that follow: they point to the removal of all obstacles that hindered the advance of Truth.

**108a.** The Inviter in whom there is no crookedness is no other than the Holy Prophet, as is clearly stated elsewhere: “Who revealed the Book to His servant, and allowed not therein any crookedness” (18:1). The whole verse clearly points to a time when Islâm would be completely established, and instead of opposition the *voices would be low* before the Beneficent. The lowness of the voice indicates submission.

**112** And whoever does good works and he is a believer, he has no fear of injustice, nor of the withholding of his due.

**113** And thus have We sent it down an Arabic Qur’ân, and have distinctly set forth therein of threats that they may guard against evil, or that it may be a reminder for them.

**114** Supremely exalted then is Allâh, the King, the Truth. And make not haste with the Qur'ân before its revelation is made complete to you, and say: My *Rabb*, increase me in knowledge.<sup>a</sup>

**115** And certainly We gave a commandment to Âdam before, but he forgot; and We found in him no resolve (to disobey).<sup>a</sup>

#### SECTION 7: The Shaitân's misleading

**116** And when We said to the *malâ'ikah*: Be submissive to Âdam, they submitted except Iblîs; he refused.

**114a.** The Prophet no doubt desired that it should be made clear to him how the great transformation would be brought about and when the severe opposition which he was facing would come to an end. Perhaps he also desired that the warning to the opponents should be made clearer, perchance they might benefit by it. The Prophet is here told that he should not make haste with regard to what was promised in the Qur'ân. The process will be gradual and meanwhile he should pray for more and more knowledge, for it was through knowledge that this great transformation was to be brought about. In fact, we are here told that as knowledge of the Truth spreads in the world, a change will come about and opposition will come to an end. Even today a spiritual transformation can be brought about by spreading knowledge of the Qur'ân, which is the greatest devotional force that the world has ever seen, and it is only on account of being ignorant of this great devotional force that the world remains in darkness. It is now for the followers of the Qur'ân to say, *Let there be light!*

**115a.** The use of the word *nasiya*, which means *he forgot*, makes it clear that there was no intention on Âdam's part to disobey Allâh's command, or *no resolve to disobey*.

**117** We said: O Âdam, this is an enemy to you and to your wife; so let him not drive you both out of the garden so that you are unhappy.

**118** Surely it is granted to you therein that you are not hungry, nor naked,

**119** And that you are not thirsty therein, nor exposed to the sun's heat.<sup>a</sup>

**120** But the *shaitân* made an evil suggestion to him; he said: O Âdam, shall I lead you to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which decays not?

**121** So they both ate of it, then their evil inclinations became manifest to them, and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden. And Âdam disobeyed his *Rabb*, and was disappointed.<sup>a</sup>

**122** Then his *Rabb* chose him, so He turned to him and guided (him).

**123** He said: Go forth here from both — all (of you) — one of you(is) enemy to another. So there will surely come to you guidance from Me; then whoever follows My guidance, he will not go astray nor be unhappy.

**119a.** The garden of which a picture is given here is an earthly garden in which all the comforts necessary for a man are made available to him. The words *you are not hungry therein* should be read along with what is said elsewhere: *And eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish* (2:35). Allegorically it signifies a state of contentment or rest in which there is no yearning either to good or to evil, being as it were a state of inertia, devoid of exertion or ambition.

**121a.** *Ghawâ* means *his life became evil to him* (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî). It is also interpreted as meaning *he was disappointed*, or *he acted ignorantly* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). It should be noted that, while in the picture of the garden drawn above in verses 118 and 119 mention is made of four things, the consequence of getting out of that state is only one, *the becoming manifest to them of their evil inclinations or their shame*. An explanation of this is found in 7:26, where it is said: “O children of Âdam, We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shame and (clothing) for beauty; and clothing that guards against evil — that is the best”. Thus it is the clothing that guards against evil that is really spoken of here and by the manifestation of the shame is meant the consciousness of having done something evil. The allegorical nature of what is as often related as the story of Âdam is thus evident. It will be further seen that the remedy pointed out is of a spiritual nature, as here in verses 123 and 124 and in 2:38. This shows that the devotional aspect of man's life and not the physical one is the real theme of Âdam's story.

**124** And whoever turns away from My Reminder, for him is surely a straitened life, and We shall raise him up blind on the day of Resurrection.<sup>a</sup>

**125** He will say: My *Rabb*, why have You raised me up blind, while I used to see?

**126** He will say: Thus did Our messages come to you, but you did neglect them. And thus are you forsaken this day.

**127** And thus do We recompense him who is extravagant and believes not in the messages of his *Rabb*. And certainly the chastisement of the Hereafter is severer and more lasting.

**128** Does it not manifest to them how many of the generations, in whose dwellings they go about, We destroyed before them? Surely there are signs in this for men of understanding.

## **SECTION 8: Punishment is certain**

**129** And had not a word gone forth from your *Rabb*, and a term been fixed, it would surely have overtaken them.

**130** So bear patiently what they say, and celebrate the praise of your *Rabb* before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify (Him) during the hours of the night and parts of the day, that you may be well pleased.<sup>a</sup>

**124a.** The human being who shuts his or her eyes to the Reminder leads a straitened life because he does not receive religious blessings. It is only a contented mind that brings ease and comfort to human being, and contentment comes only through faith in Allâh.

**131** And strain not your eyes toward that with which We have provided different classes of them, (of) the splendour of this world's life, that We may thereby try them. And the sustenance of your *Rabb* is better and more abiding.

**132** And enjoin prayer on your people, and steadily adhere to it. We ask not of you sustenance. We provide for you. And the (good) end is for guarding against evil.

**133** And they say: Why does he not bring us a sign from his *Rabb*? Has not there come to them a clear evidence of what is in the previous Books?<sup>a</sup>

**134** And if We had destroyed them with chastisement before it, they would have said: Our *Rabb*, why did You not send to us a messenger, so that we might have followed Thy messages before we met disgrace and shame?

**135** Say: Every-one (of us) is waiting, so wait. Soon you will come to know who the follower of the even path is and who goes aright.

**130a.** The Holy Prophet, while told to bear persecutions patiently for a time, is also told to seek comfort in prayer. Hence the injunction to bear patiently is at once followed by an injunction to pray. And he did find comfort in prayer under the severest persecutions. “The coolness of my eyes is in prayer,” he is reported to have said (*Mishkât al-Masâbîh* (Hadîth), by Shaikh Walî al-Dîn Muḥammad ‘Abd Allâh 25). This verse speaks of the five obligatory prayers and the two optional ones. Before the rising of the sun is the dawn prayer, before its setting the ‘*asr*’ prayer. Three prayers, the *Maghrib*, the ‘*ishâ*’ and the *tahajjud* (the last named being optional), occur during the hours of the night, while during parts of the day are the *zuhr* and the *duhâ*, the latter again being optional, being a short prayer in the early forenoon.

**133a.** The Arabic Glorious Qur’ân is here called a clear evidence of what is contained in the previous Books, because it fulfils their prophecies and corroborates their truth.